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EARLE DILATUSH'S HOLLY FARM

R. F. D. No. 1

ROBBINSVILLE, NEW JERSEY

U. S. Department of Agriculture

AMERICAN HOLLY
(Ilex Opaca)
Var. "Old Heavy Berry"
— Dilatush —

A Personal Word

When I first started to grow American Holly more than forty years ago, nurserymen raised only a few and little was written about the culture of this wonderful native. I had to learn the hard way, through practical experience. For many years I found widespread feeling among people that Holly could not be successfully grown; that it was "hard to grow". Nothing could be further from the truth as you will see in reading this booklet. For cultivated named varieties of American Holly have compact masses of roots that transplant with great ease. And they are extremely hardy.

If you hear friends say that "Holly is hard to grow" or that "Holly is not hardy", chances are that they have tried to grow wild Hollies, tender Southern Hollies, or exotic varieties from the Far West. Much of my life work has been spent in seeking and growing hardy heavy berrying named varieties of American Holly. Some of the best of them are described in this booklet. Planted right, these hardy varieties will grow most anywhere. It is as simple as that.

EARLE DILATUSH



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT AMERICAN HOLLIES

Will Holly Grow in the State Where I Live?

Holly is tough and will grow most anywhere in the United States with the following exceptions:

Holly will not grow in swampy ground. It likes drainage. If you can dig a hole in which water will stand more than two weeks at a time, the location is insufficiently drained for Holly.

Holly will not grow in extremely wind-swept high locations unless you make use of natural evergreen windbreaks or plant where buildings or stone walls protect the trees. Well protected from the wind, Hollies have been known to grow in altitudes of 3,500 feet and subject to temperatures of thirty below zero.

Will Holly Grow in My Kind of Soil?

Chances are excellent that it will. If Oak Leafmold is used in planting, Holly will grow in most any kind of well drained soil. As Hollies like acid soils, a top mulch of sour Oak Leafmold should be added each year in sweet soil areas. (See page 4 for leafmold information.)

Where in the Yard Should I Plant My Hollies?

Some varieties of Holly differ greatly in manner and speed of growth. Holly prefers sun, but is happy in any amount of shade, though it seldom bears as heavily in shade as in sun. Holly in shade also seeks the sun with its branches and requires pruning each

year to prevent it from becoming scraggly.

Do not plant under the branches of large trees, especially maples, as large tree roots take food and water away from the Holly and cause it to look sickly.

Twiggy varieties adapt well to planting near the house. Faster growing varieties are best planted in open surroundings. Give your tree plenty of room if you wish it to grow to full specimen size. Perhaps a sixteen foot circle could be allotted. (Additional information is available under "varieties" on page 6.)

What Is the Best Time of Year to Transplant Holly?

Trees which are dug from the earth with a burlap root ball should be transplanted during the months of March, April and early May; September, October and early November.

If you buy trees in pots or wire baskets they may be transplanted at any time when the ground is not frozen. Early summer shipment should be avoided due to the tender new growth.

How Fast Will My Holly Grow?

Holly in the wild will grow about one to three inches annually. Holly in your yard, properly planted and watered should grow from six to twelve inches annually. Top branches, incidentally, grow faster than side branches.

Holly is a long-lived tree and one hundred years is not an uncommon age.

Should a Holly Lose All of Its Leaves in Early Spring?

No, but when the new growth comes out it is normal for the oldest and most wind-battered leaves to turn yellow and fall. Hollies keep two years' leaves on the tree most of the time.

If roots are cut to any extent when Hollies are dug it may cause them to shed their leaves. In these cases new leaves should sprout by late spring.

How Soon Will My Holly Bear Berries?

We often have berries on baby Hollies. (See photo inside back cover). However, a Holly under four feet of bushy height is rather immature and cannot be expected to bear berries every year, nor can one predict which years it will bear, except to say that the average bearing of young Hollies here is **more** than one time in three years. Trees over four or five feet of bushy height almost always berry steadily every year. Some of our Old Heavy Berry Hollies have not missed berrying in more than fifteen years and have about the same amount of berries each year.

How Often Should I Water My Holly?

Hollies should be thoroughly soaked with water when planted. If insufficient water is used in planting and the earth is not properly settled around the roots the tree may sicken or even die.

Hollies should be literally soaked with water when watering, for a sprinkling does little good. We think nothing of putting a hundred gallons of water on an eight foot

Holly. To accomplish this we make a continuous dike (a few inches high) just under the outermost tips of the branches all the way around the tree. This dike will allow you to put many gallons of water on your tree without its running off.

In well drained soil it is a good idea to water your Holly heavily about once every ten days or two weeks during the growing season. The tree probably will not die if you do not water it over the years but you will have much bigger berries and much lovelier foliage if you do water.

What Is the Right Way to Plant My Holly?

Potted Hollies should have the pots removed before planting. Wire basketed Hollies may be planted basket and all. Balled and burlapped Hollies should be planted with the burlap on. (Removal of the burlap may disturb the roots).

Dig a hole for your tree at least twice as wide as the root ball and somewhat deeper. Save the top soil as you dig the hole and use it in the bottom. Place the Holly in the hole so that the top of the root ball or container is at the level of the surrounding earth. Fill the hole with Oak Leafmold and then water sloppy wet. After the leafmold settles around the roots, more should be added so that there is a top mulch of Oak Leafmold about two inches thick over the root area, like a blanket.

After watering again a mulch of tobacco stems (perhaps a half inch thick) may be applied in the form of a blanket over the leafmold. This will help make the leaves darker green.

Is It Really True That There Are Boy and Girl Hollies?

Yes. Female Hollies have berries. Male Hollies do not. It may help you to remember which is which if you will think of the berries as babies. You absolutely must have a male Holly somewhere around if you expect to get berries on your female Holly.

It works this way in the springtime: Bees carry the yellow pollen dust from the flowers of the male tree to the waiting flowers of the female tree. After this is done, the male flowers shrivel up. But on the female tree, the flower petals fall and the little green center of the flower swells and grows to be a green berry. By late autumn the green berries turn to bright red and remain on the trees all winter until the birds eat them in the spring. (See inside back cover for picture of flowers on potted Hollies).

As male Hollies produce quantities of pollen it is not necessary to plant more than one male in a group of up to ten females of equal size. By the same token a small male will service a quite considerably larger female Holly.

Is It Harmful to Prune Hollies at Christmas Time?

Not at all. Pruning improves Holly and makes it more dense and attractive. One of my oldest friends has a very tall Holly tree and each year she trims only as high as she can reach. The bottom part of her Holly is very dense and lovely while the unpruned top is loose and scraggly.

Hollies are easy to prune as they do not seem to mind where you cut them. However all cuts should be made with sharp pruners or saw. Branches should never be broken or pulled from the tree as this causes large scars to form that waste the growing energy of the tree.

Hollies may be cut off at the top to make broad bushes or trimmed at the sides to make tall columns or pyramids.

What Is the Best Way to Prune Young Hollies?

It is an excellent idea to cut a half inch or more out of the top of yearling Hollies to help them to branch early. Two to four year olds should have all their longest branch ends cut back a bit to make them grow bushier. After the fourth year pruning is more a matter of shaping the Holly to the shadow outline or form that you personally prefer.

Most young Hollies do not have a pointed top or pyramidal shape until they have reached about three feet of bushy height. Somewhere about this height Mother Nature gives the word and a leader will shoot up sometimes as much as two feet or more in one year. When this happens all the tips of this leader should be clipped a bit to allow the rest of the bush to "catch up."

Much of this odd behavior may be traced to the thought that named variety Hollies are grown from rooted twigs of large Hollies and it takes Mother Nature a few years to change from the idea of a branch to a normal upright growing tree.

If you have any Holly problems or wish us to try to identify Hollies, please feel free to send sample branches. They mail best bagged in polyethylene or wrapped in waterproof paper, with the ends wrapped in wet cotton. A few stamps would be appreciated with your enquiry.

Why Is Oak Leafmold the Best Material in Which to Plant Hollies?

The real value of Oak Leafmold comes from its being "alive". We gather it from woodlands where it is from four to ten inches thick, with the top leaves only a few years old while the bottom layers have remained for decades. The whole mass comes in varying degrees of decomposition. Regardless of how long it has remained in the woods, it has been impregnated day by day with light and air. When you get Oak Leafmold it is alive with helpful bacteria, which release plant-foods over a long period so that it "wears well" and feeds plants for several years.

In contrast are the peat mosses and other forms of humus which are mined from below the surface of bogs. While they hold the moisture as does Oak Leafmold they have little food value. Even leafmold composted from fallen leaves (in the home yard) has not the value of the Oak Leafmold from the forest.

Nor should we overlook the insulating value of Oak Leafmold as it greatly cuts down the depth penetration of frost. When you figure that ground in an open field will freeze 18 inches and that the same cold penetrates only three inches in the forest floor, you can begin to see what I mean. Oak Leafmold is a valuable insulating blanket winter and summer.

If I could get no more Oak Leafmold I am afraid that I would go out of the Holly business . . . for every Holly that we grow is planted with it and I have never found anything else that would grow Holly as well.

Many people dig their own leafmold from a nearby woods of big Oaks. However, we do sell Oak Leafmold and would be very happy to send you some if you would like us to. (Prices on page 8 of this booklet).

What Fertilizers Are Best for Holly?

Hollies are harmed by the use of lime, bone meal, fresh manures and many chemical fertilizers. Broadleaf evergreen fertilizers are less harmful to Holly but most of them make Holly grow rather rapidly. You might think that this was an advantage but such is not the case for rapidly growing Hollies very often have ugly brownish-green winter foliage, and the year after making this forced growth most Hollies will not berry well. It upsets them. Many Hollies also lose all their leaves the spring after making an unnatural forced growth.

Yet Hollies do need a yearly feeding and if no fertilizer is used the leaves may eventually take on an ugly color from lack of nutriment.

A slow, steady fertilizer is what Hollies like. One of the best that we have ever found is tobacco stems (chopped). This is a by-product of making cigars and is surprisingly rich in the foods that Hollies like. Applied as a top mulch the tobacco stems rot slowly and with each watering or rain the juices are carried down to the roots of the tree. We use tobacco stems on our trees here at the Holly Farm at a measure of roughly five pounds per year per foot of height. This results in about an inch thick mulch on top of the ground underneath the branches. We renew this tobacco mulch each year but the time of application is not too important though we do advise putting it on ahead of the spring growing season. Tobacco is incidentally very good for making the foliage of most any evergreen a darker green, though it is slow acting. Many people use it on roses, too. If you cannot easily obtain tobacco stems we would be glad to send you some. (Prices on page 8).

Is It True That Holly Leaves Are a "Barometer" of the Health of the Tree?

Yes, very true. Holly Leaves which are yellowish-green in color indicate that the Holly is either unhappy with the soil it is in, or that it needs fertilizer. The best cure is to prune the tree well then dig it up and replant it in Oak Leafmold with a top mulch of tobacco stems. Within a year's time the Holly should be lovely and dark green again.

Purplish, reddish or brownish tinted leaves are caused by the action of Jack Frost and usually occur only on the last few inches of the branches that grew the latest in the summer. These late growing branches are still tender when cold weather comes and do not have a chance to harden to a dark green color but are painted by the frost. It is common on baby Hollies as they do not seem to know when to stop growing and often grow right on up until frost time. It rarely occurs on Hollies over three feet of bushy height unless they have been forced to grow abnormally by chemical fertilizers or strong manures. The cure is thus patience on young Hollies and proper planting and feeding practices on older trees.

Do Hollies Have Any Insect Troubles?

Very few and these are not serious. Only about one in ten Holly owners will ever have to spray.

There is a Holly Leaf Miner, so called because it mines the green matter from below the upper surface of the leaf. To a student of nature, this insect is most interesting. It lives only on Holly and is kept under control in the wild by birds and other insects. Here at the Holly Farm we do not have to spray the outlying fields where the birds live and

nest but must spray the Hollies near the buildings. Leaf Miner apparently develops only in populated areas. The leaf miner will not kill or seriously injure a Holly if never sprayed for, but it makes the leaves look ugly and causes them to fall from the trees more than is usual in the late spring.

It is a larvae while mining, a pupae over winter and a fly in late spring. The fly is not capable of laying eggs for about two weeks after hatching from the "mine" and during this time eats only Holly leaves in the manner of a needle-prick on the tiny newest leaves in May. Thus at the first sign of these "needle-pricks" you can spray with excellent results. It is well to spray a week later to "make sure" of getting them all. Timing is important as the leaf miners are not easily killed at any other time except when they are in the fly stage.

A good spray is one that has Lindane as a major ingredient. (Available at Farm and Garden stores . . . use as recommended on the label for broadleaf evergreens).

Dull grayish-green leaves may be caused by red mites. These are usually kept under control in the wild and in the home yard by other insects that eat them (such as lady-bird beetles). Some of the World War II sprays (more so than the newest sprays) tend to kill the enemies of the red mite and therefore allow it to multiply. Thus if you have red mite, it was most likely caused by your own or your neighbor's spraying. A magnifying glass on the underside of the most grayish leaves should reveal many eggs and tiny red mites if they are there. Best cure is a pure dormant oil spray on a warm day in late winter, which will not help the present leaves but will cause the new leaves to be normal. (Use as recommended on the label for broadleaf evergreens; available at Farm and Garden stores).

Varieties of American Holly (*Ilex Opaca*)

OLD HEAVY BERRY (Dilatush)

Pictured in color on the front cover. One of the most outstanding of all the Hollies. Very attractive when planted by itself as a specimen. Yields top grade cut Holly for Christmas decoration.

CARDINAL IMPROVED (Dilatush)

HEDGEHOLLY (Bosley)

Both varieties grow in a dense twiggy manner and shear easily. They are thus ideal for planting next to the house on each side of the doorway (or at the corners of the house). They are wonderful for Holly hedges and of course have typical stickery green leaves and bright red berries. (A field of Cardinal Hollies is shown in the upper right photo on the inside back cover).

➤ MARYLAND DWARF (Dilatush)

This Holly is dwarf in height but grows fairly rapidly sideways. We like them planted under picture windows and at the base of the front steps or in any place where a low spreading evergreen is attractive. Like many dwarfs, it does not berry well.

CANARY YELLOW BERRY (Dilatush)

We like yellow berried Hollies planted amongst red berried Hollies . . . the effect is unusual. Would you like to try one in your garden?

PERFECTION (Dilatush)

A lovely Holly that grows more foliage in less time than any variety we know. Perfection usually develops a broad pyramidal form with very little trimming and is excellent for planting alone or as a screen or mass planting. It has lovely stickery green leaves and bright red berries.

OTHER VARIETIES (We have originated more than thirty)

There are many good varieties of Holly. If we do not have the size that you wish in the varieties listed above, perhaps you would like to have some other variety. We'd be glad to correspond with you about it or if you would like to give us a free hand in choosing varieties for you, we'd be glad to do so.

MALES FOR POLLENATION OF THE ABOVE FEMALE HOLLIES

We have them, grown from cuttings from our own big specimen male Hollies. (See page three for facts about male and female Hollies). Please do not forget to include males in your order.

ENGLISH, CHINESE, JAPANESE HOLLIES (*I. Aquifolium*, *Cornuta*, *Crenata* varieties)

While this entire booklet is written about hardy varieties of American Holly (*Ilex Opaca*) we do stock large quantities of potted exotic Hollies as well as a number of basketed and specimen sizes of some of them. If you have seen exotic Hollies and want some but wonder if you can grow them we would be glad to advise what we think of your planting location and also what we have to sell in the kind that you wish. (Please send sketch of home and yard, indicating North and where you wish to plant; also please indicate variety you wish, or send sample leaf or drawing). If we do not have the exotic variety that you wish, we will gladly provide addresses of other possible sources. A few stamps would be appreciated with your enquiry.

PRICE LIST

Hollies in Pots (4-inch diameter Mennepots)

Our potted Hollies are carefully packed and should arrive at your home in fresh healthy condition. Each pot is polyethylene bagged to hold moisture during shipment. Strong cardboard cartons are used in parcel post shipments and tough handmade wooden boxes for Railway Express shipments. Each pot is labeled with a bright plastic variety marker.

Our potted Hollies are usually available in all varieties listed in this catalog. They are one year or more of age and the height above the pot varies from three to six inches.

\$2.00 each Postpaid in lots of one to five Hollies.

\$1.50 each in lots of 5 to 20 Hollies (plus Express charges)*.

\$1.25 each in lots of 20 to 100 Hollies (plus Express charges)*.

*There is a minimum Express charge of about \$2.00 but on orders of twenty or more the Express cost seldom exceeds 15c each.

Varieties may be mixed in any way desired to obtain a quantity price. Express is payable on arrival. Please send check for Hollies only.

‡Two-year-old Hollies in eight-inch diameter tar paper pots are available at double the above prices. Packing and description are similar except that they are twice as big as the yearling Hollies described above and they also are starting to branch out, though lightly. Express costs seldom exceed 70c each on orders of eight or more.

Hollies in Wire Baskets

(See photo upper left hand corner inside back cover)

Our wire basketed Hollies are packed so well that it is almost impossible for them to get broken in shipment. The top wire cage should be removed before planting, which is easy for it is merely stapled to the bottom basket with wire rings. Before planting, the paper and burlap wrappings (if any) should be removed from over the bottom basket so that you have nothing left but the wire basketed Holly as it appears in the left of the picture. If the paper within the basket is not rotted it would be well to punch a number of holes in it to help with drainage and root growth. The Holly may then be planted bottom basket and all.

Well branched Hollies about a foot and a half high above the basket, in twelve-inch diameter wire baskets, weight about 50 lbs. are \$10.00 each, including a small potted male companion. Railway Express charges are additional (payable on arrival) and will usually vary between two and three dollars to points east of the Mississippi River.

Very nice well-branched Hollies three to four feet high above the basket in large wire baskets weighing about 100 lbs. are \$25.00 each, including a potted male companion. Railway Express charges are additional (payable on arrival) and usually vary between three and six dollars to points east of the Mississippi River.

Please turn page for prices and descriptions of larger Hollies, Oak Leafmold, and Tobacco Stem plantfood.

Why not drive out to see our Holly Farm? You will find it different and interesting. Our homes and buildings are scattered among thousands of Hollies on some fifteen acres of farmland. We are between Bordentown and Hightstown on U. S. Highway #130, thus convenient to either Exit 7 or Exit 8 of the New Jersey Turnpike. You can't miss us for we have a number of large signs out and the Hollies are planted along more than a thousand feet of highway frontage.

Big Hollies

Some of the first Hollies that I planted more than forty years ago are now magnificent bushy trees sixteen feet high or higher, with branch spreads of ten feet or more. (See photo on inside front cover). Every year since I first started to exhibit them at the Philadelphia Flower Show, they have won first prize for Holly. These big trees transplant just as well as little ones when handled properly with large earth balls. Prices on request.

Equally lovely Hollies of a five to six foot size (see field photo inside back cover) are very practical as they are big enough to be showy yet are relatively inexpensive to transport and plant. (Earth ball size will not exceed one ton).

\$125.00 each, including Oak Leafmold and tobacco needed in planting. These trees are created by intense shearing and are old for their height. (20 to 30 years of age). Nothing like them anywhere else. (Delivery and planting service available at moderate cost).

Oak Leafmold

We package our leafmold in sturdy laminated burlap bags that contain quite generously more than a bushel. Average weight about 70 lbs. (Varies with moisture content).

\$1.25 per bag in lots of 5 to 20 bags (plus freight charges)*.

\$1.00 per bag in lots of 20 or more bags (plus freight charges)*.

*Due to freight minimum charge, it is impractical to ship less than five bags at a time. However, this is none too many to have on hand, for Oak Leafmold is wonderful for rhododendrons, azaleas and other acid loving plants. (Note: Freight may exceed cost of the leafmold to distant points).

Tobacco Stems

Packaged in burlap sacks that contain more than a bushel. Weight about 20 pounds each.

\$1.25 per bag in lots of 5 to 20 bags (plus freight charges)*.

\$1.00 per bag in lots of 20 bags or more (plus freight charges)*.

*Due to freight minimum charge it is impractical to ship less than five bags.

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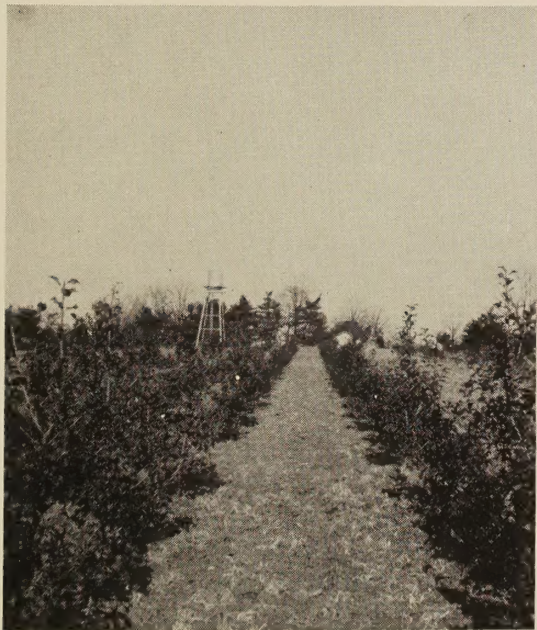
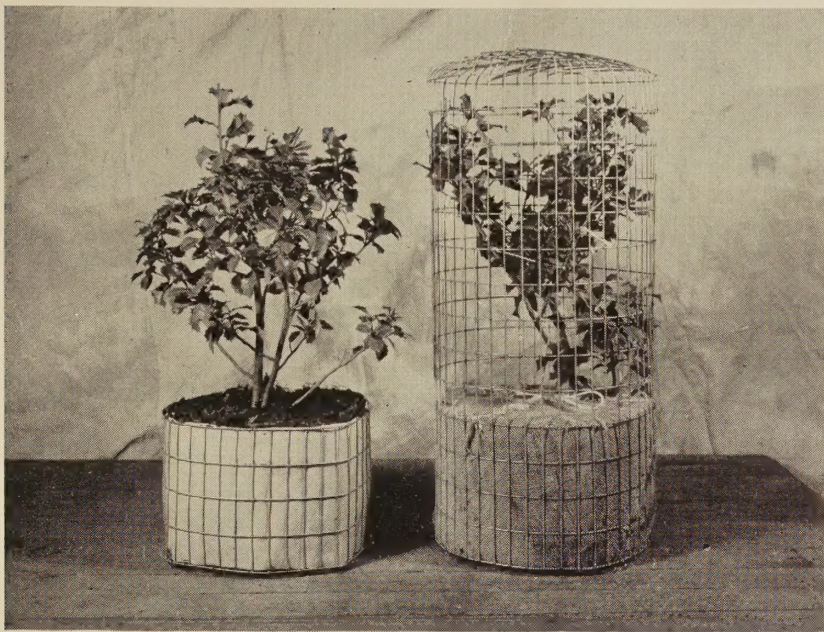
EARLE DILATUSH'S HOLLY FARM

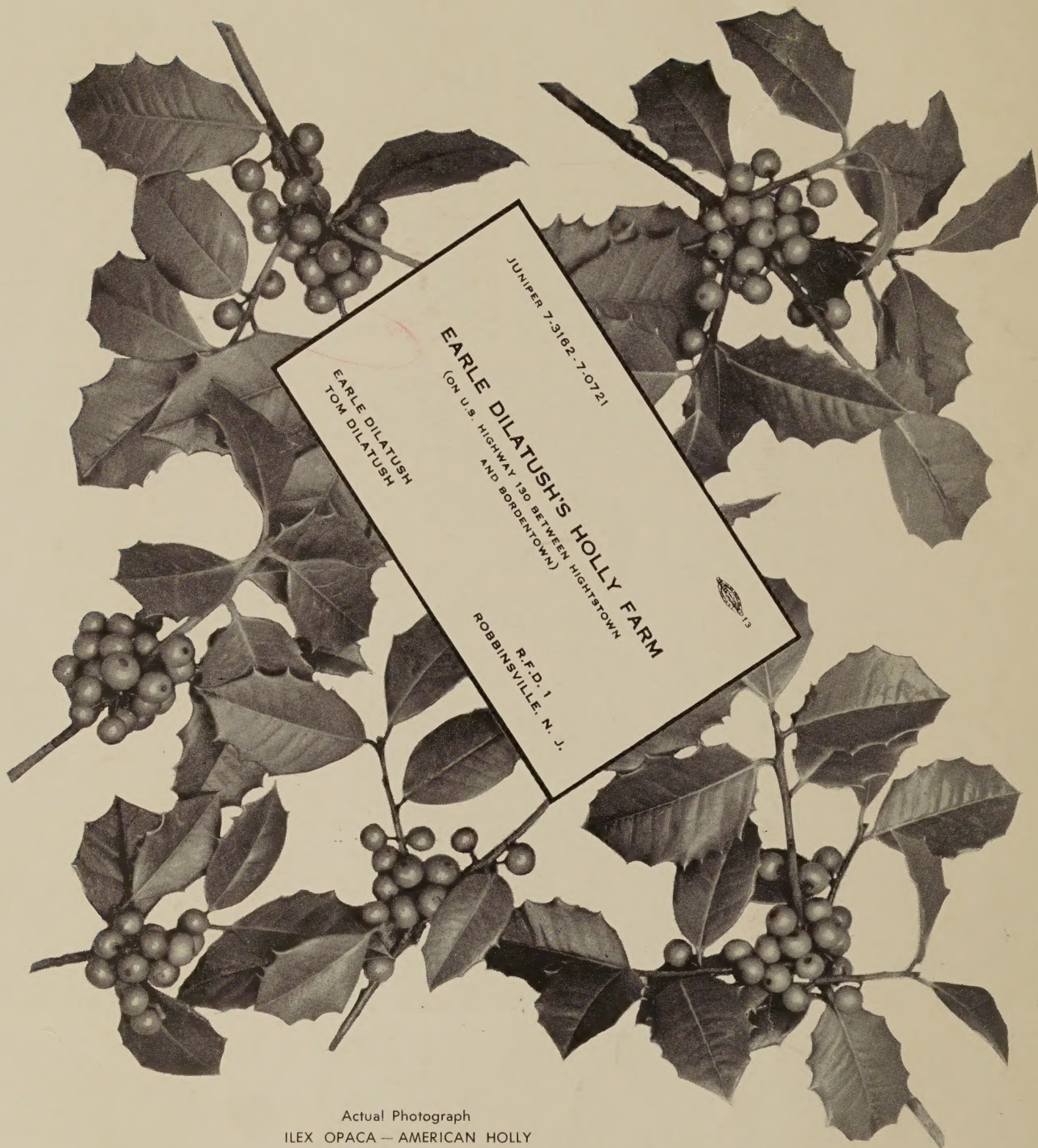
(On U. S. Highway 130 Between Hightstown and Bordentown)

R. F. D. 1, ROBBINSVILLE, N. J.

Earle Dilatush

Tom Dilatush





Actual Photograph
ILEX OPACA — AMERICAN HOLLY
Var. "OLD HEAVY BERRY"

VISITORS WELCOME: Located Between New York and Philadelphia on U. S. Highway #130, less than ten miles from either Exit 8 (Hightstown) or Exit 7 (Bordentown) of the New Jersey Turnpike